

**SUMMARY OF THE  
ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 24, 2001**

The Accrediting Authority Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met on Wednesday, January 24, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) by teleconference. The meeting was led by its chair, Mr. Louis Johnson of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the distributed agenda items.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Johnson began the meeting by welcoming those in attendance. Minutes of the January 10, 2001 meeting will be reviewed at the next scheduled teleconference.

**SECONDARY ACCREDITATION**

Mr. Johnson began the discussion concerning primary and secondary accreditation and the necessity for and responsibilities of both classifications. The request from some states not currently participating in NELAC but which desire to recognize NELAC and the NELAC Standard was discussed. A letter that Mr. Johnson had written and forwarded to all committee members was reviewed concerning the positive aspects of having NELAC "Recognizing Authorities." These states would not actively participate in NELAC but would recognize the NELAC Standard and offer reciprocity accordingly. The need, however, remains for the classification of NELAC secondary accrediting authorities. The letter, as written by Mr. Johnson, was approved by all committee members and will be forwarded to Ms. Jeanne Hankins, Director of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) for her consideration.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION CLEARINGHOUSE**

Mr. Paul Baker began the discussion of the need for a clearinghouse for conflict resolution in the NELAC process. The committee discussed various aspects of the idea including the practicality and need for such a group, as well as proposing existing groups to be included in the process. The committee resolved a theoretical process for proposal. Mr. Scott Hoatson, Mr. George Krisztian and Mr. Baker had authored a proposal for the process specific to each type of conflict, e.g., conflicts resulting from on-site inspections and differing interpretations of the NELAC Standard between accrediting authorities and laboratories as well as conflicts between accrediting authorities. The committee was in agreement that amendments to the NELAC Standard should be proposed to reflect and to enforce the authority of such a group and to bind those parties that participate in or actively recognize the NELAC Standard to the decisions made in the process of conflict resolution. The consensus among committee members present was that Chapter 6 needs to include these proposed changes with references to the conflict resolution process included in Chapters 3 and 4 of the existing NELAC Standard. The committee also agreed on elements of the process and groups to be involved

that ensured as many of the original authors and pertinent committee members would be involved in a decision making process to adequately interpret the intent of the accepted NELAC Standard. The process should be led by the NELAP Director, and forwarded to the best qualified NELAC Committee to resolve a standard's interpretation question/conflict and then forwarded onto the NELAC Board of Directors by the NELAP Director for final decision on all resolutions. In all cases the NELAP Director would orchestrate the process but would always seek assistance from qualified groups or committees involved in the NELAC process. Mr. Baker, Mr. Kirsztian and Mr. Hoatson will revise their original proposal to incorporate the committees consensus decisions concerning the conflict resolution process and distribute the proposal to all committee members for evaluation before the next scheduled teleconference. The subcommittee will also provide proposed language for inclusion in Chapter 6 of the NELAC Standard, referencing this procedure.

### **QMP DOCUMENT FOR NELAP**

The topic of developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the NELAP accreditation process concerning on-site audits was opened by Mr. Johnson who asked that Mr. Jeff Flowers update the committee on the progress of that task. Mr. Flowers discussed the format that would be most usable for this type of document and named two similar, previously written documents from other accreditation programs that would serve as a template for the NELAP-specific SOP. Mr. Flowers will forward a draft version of the quality management plan (QMP) document to the committee before the next scheduled teleconference.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF DRAFT QUESTIONNAIRE**

The subject of a draft questionnaire for the evaluation of consistency during NELAC on-site assessments was raised by Mr. Johnson and the committee agreed that this topic should be tabled until the next scheduled teleconference. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Hoatson will schedule time in the interim to further progress on the existing questionnaire draft and formalize a final draft for the consideration of the committee. Mr. Johnson will contact the On-site Committee chairperson, Mr. Bill Ingersoll, to coordinate efforts on the questionnaire.

### **FUTURE TELECONFERENCES**

Mr. Johnson reminded those present at the teleconference of the next two Accrediting Authority teleconferences. The meetings are scheduled for 2:00 p.m. EST on February 7, 2001 and February 21, 2001.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Johnson called for any further discussion of old business or any new topics for the committee's consideration. No further discussion was initiated so Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting after thanking those in attendance.



**ACTION ITEMS  
ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 24, 2001**

| <b>Item No.</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be Completed</b> |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1.              | Mr. Johnson will forward the letter recommending the category of NELAC membership referred to as "Recognizing Authority" to Ms. Jeanne Hankins for her consideration.  | 2/7/2001                    |
| 2.              | Mr. Baker, Mr. Krisztian and Mr. Hoatson will revise the draft proposal for the formation of a conflict resolution clearinghouse and forward the revision to the Committee for discussion at the next teleconference. The subcommittee will provide draft language for Chapter 6 of the NELAC Standards. | 2/7/2001                    |
| 3.              | Mr. Flowers will forward a draft QMP document to the Committee for discussion at the next teleconference.  | 2/7/2001                    |
| 4.              | Mr. Johnson and Mr. Hoatson will continue work on the existing draft for a NELAC on-site assessment questionnaire  | 2/7/2001                    |

**PARTICIPANTS  
ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 24, 2001**

| <b>Name</b>                         | <b>Affiliation</b>   | <b>Address</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Johnson, Louis      Chair           | LA Department of<br>Environmental Quality                          | T: (225)765-2405<br>F: (225)765-2408<br>E: louis_j@deq.state.la.us    |
| Baker, Paul                         | PA Dept. Of Environmental<br>Protection, Bureau of<br>Laboratories | T: (717)783-1978<br>F: (717)783-1502<br>E: baker.paul@dep.state.pa.us |
| Cusick, William<br>(Absent)         | American Association of Pest<br>Control Officials                  | T: (916)262-1434<br>F: (916)262-1572<br>E: wcusick@cdfa.ca.gov        |
| Flowers, Jefferson                  | Flowers Chemical<br>Laboratories, Inc.                             | T: (407)339-5984<br>F: (407)260-6110<br>E: jeff@flowerslabs.com       |
| Glick, Ed<br>(Absent)               | USEPA/OW/OGWDW-TSC   | T: (513)569-7939<br>F: (513)569-7191<br>E: glick.ed@epa.gov           |
| Hoatson, Scott                      | Del Mar Analytical   | T: (949) 261-1022<br>F: (949) 261-1228<br>E: shoatson@dmalabs.com     |
| Krisztian, George<br>(Absent)       | State of Michigan - Dept. of<br>Env. Quality                       | T: (517)335-8812<br>F: (517)335-9600<br>E: krisztig@state.mi.us       |
| Mertens, Sharon<br>(Absent)         | STL Austin   | T: (512) 310-5236<br>F: (512) 244-0160<br>E: smertens@stl-inc.com     |
| Robinson, Roxanne<br>(Absent)       | A2LA   | T: (301) 644-3208<br>F: (301) 622-2974<br>E: rrobinson@a2la.org       |
| Arms, Steve<br>(Invited)            |  | T:<br>F:<br>E:  |
| Ennis, Todd<br>(Contractor Support) | Research Triangle Institute  | T: (919)541-7226<br>F: (919)541-7386<br>E: jte@rti.org                |

